Compassion in Action: Life Release Day Observed Through Prayer, Education, and Service

Photo Courtesy: Hua Zang Si (Community members unite across California to honor the Life Release Day Designated by Buddha, transforming compassion into action through ceremonies, education, and charitable outreach.)

Buddhist communities across California came together on October 29 to honor "The Life Release Day Designated by Buddha," a global observance dedicated to compassion, the protection of life, and the collective aspiration for peace.

On the morning of October 29, 2025, the H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha III Cultural and Art Museum hosted a life release event at the Marina Del Rey harbor, drawing spiritual leaders and community members from across Southern California. The event was led by Venerable Master Ruzun Ruohui, Abbess of Hua Zang Si Temple and Hongfa Temple.

Participants gathered in unity to chant praises and recite the Great Compassion Mantra of Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva. Venerable Master Ruzun Ruohui blessed the fish awaiting release with consecrated Dharma water, offering prayers that these sentient beings be freed from suffering and karmic obstructions. Upon release, the fish were returned to the ocean with the hope that they would find safety and live free from harm and predators.

Photo Courtesy: H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha III Cultural and Art Museum
Venerable Master Ruzun Ruohui blesses fish awaiting release with Dharma water during the Life Release Day ceremony at Marina Del Rey.

The Life Release Day Designated by Buddha originated on October 29, 2009, when H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha III personally led His disciples in a life release ceremony following a significant Buddhist event. He compassionately declared this day as “Life Release Day” to promote the protection of life and the practice of compassion.

The H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha III Cultural and Art Museum upholds the compassionate teachings of H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha III. The museum urges all sectors of society to transform empathy into action—promoting the safeguarding of life, the cessation of killing, and the daily practices of kindness as a fundamental way of living. Venerable Master Ruzun Ruohui emphasized that life release practices are not confined to specific days or locations. Whenever a life is in danger, we are called to act—to return it to a suitable environment, to grant it freedom, and to relieve it from fear.

On October 29, 2025, San Francisco’s Hua Zang Si Temple also held a life release ceremony at San Rafael. Participants from diverse cultural backgrounds gathered to recite the Heart Sutra and the Great Compassion Mantra before gently releasing fish back to their natural habitat. Organizers emphasized that life release is not only a

spiritual practice, but also a call to awaken society's compassion and deepen our care for the sentient beings.

Photo Courtesy: H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha III Cultural and Art Museum
Upon release, the fish were returned to the ocean.

To nurture compassion in the next generation, Hua Zang Si Temple held a Buddhist children's story class on October 19. Through storytelling and interactive learning, the program guided young participants to understand the core values of "equality of all life" and "compassion without harm." The initiative was warmly received by parents, who expressed deep appreciation for the temple's commitment to meaningful and values-based education.

On October 26, Macang Monastery in San Francisco held a special "Life Release Day Blessing and Food Donation Ceremony" in honor of the Life Release Day Designated by Buddha. Following collective sutra recitation and prayers by both monastics and lay practitioners, the temple donated food supplies to unhoused individuals and low-income families—embodying the Buddhist spirit of compassion and service to those in need.

This year's Life Release Day Designated by Buddha brought together Buddhist disciples and compassionate leaders from all walks of life through a range of activities—including life release ceremonies, prayer gatherings, educational outreach,

and food donations. Participants were reminded that cultivation is not merely a slogan, but a continuous practice through every kind thought and virtuous deed.

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